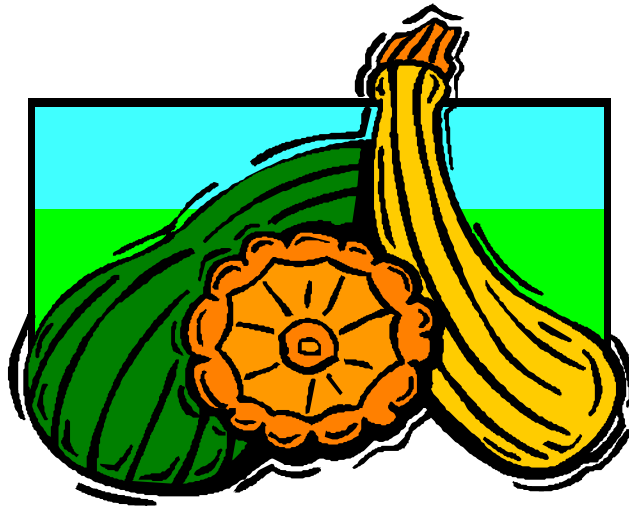


VEGETABLE OF THE MONTH AUGUST

SUMMER SQUASH



Squash are fleshy vegetables protected by a hard rind. They belong to the plant family that includes melons and cucumbers. The skin/rind of summer squash are rich in the nutrient beta-carotene, but the fleshy portion of this vegetable does not. To gain the full nutritional benefits of this vegetable, the skins/rinds must be eaten.

Squash has been a staple for the Native Americans for over 5000 years, and was a mainstay for early European who settled in America. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were enthusiastic squash growers. In the nineteenth century, merchant seamen returned from other parts of the Americas with many new varieties. This resulted in the various colors, shapes, and sizes that are available today.

Summer Squash

Serving Size 1/2 medium (98g/3.5oz)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 20 Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g **1%**

Sodium 0mg **0%**

Potassium 260mg **10%**

Total Carbohydrate 4g **2%**

Dietary Fiber 2g **4%**

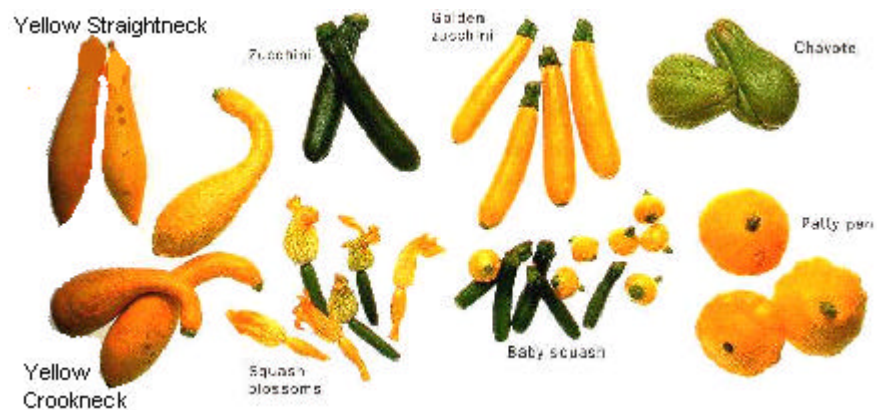
Sugars 2g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 6% Vitamin C 30%

Calcium 2% Iron 2%

Varieties: Even though some varieties grow on vines while others grow on bushes, squash are commonly divided into the two groups, summer and winter. There are several types of summer squash, but zucchini is the most popular summer squash purchased in the United States. Summer squash come in many different colors and shapes. The different varieties of squash can be used interchangeable in most recipes, because most squash are similar in texture and flavor.



How To Select: Choose squash that are firm and fairly heavy for their size, otherwise they may be dry and cottony inside. Look for squash that have bright, glossy exteriors. Avoid buying squash that have nicks or bruises on their skins or ones that have soft spots.

Storage: Place summer squash in plastic bags and store in the refrigerator. Fresh summer squash should keep for up to a week. Thicker-shinned varieties such as chayote will stay fresh for two weeks or longer.



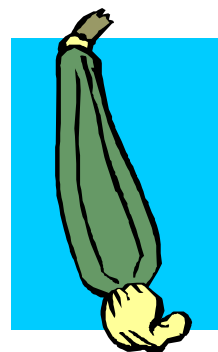
Make **Summer Squash** Part of Your **5 A DAY** Plan

It is easy to make summer squash part of your **5 A Day Plan**. Try cooking several varieties of summer squash together. This will make a colorful side dish. Try adding some of your favorite seasonings to summer squash that has been steamed, sautéed, or grilled. Squash can be used to make great tasting casseroles. Sliced or grated raw squash can be a wonderful addition to your favorite salad. Add squash to your next vegetable tray. Grated summer squash makes a good substitute for carrots in a carrot cake.

Recipes

Sautéed Summer Squash

2 cups summer squash, sliced
olive oil cooking spray
1 cup minced onions
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1/2 cup chopped parsley



Wash and cut squash into slices. Spray saucepan with vegetable spray. Add onions and sauté until golden brown. Add squash and cook until tender, for about 10 minutes, shaking pan occasionally to keep squash from sticking. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve. Makes 4 servings.

Nutritional Analysis per serving: Calories 18, Total Fat 0.5g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 3g, Protein 1g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 1g, Sodium 439mg.
Carbohydrates 59 % Protein 19 % Fat 22 %

Grilled Summer Squash

2 medium summer squash
Vegetable spray

Dill or lemon pepper

Slice squash lengthwise (into long strips). Spray each side of squash strips with vegetable spray. Place slices directly onto warmed grill. Remove from grill when squash is tender but still firm. Place squash in serving dish and sprinkle with dill and/or lemon pepper. Makes 4 servings.

Nutritional Analysis per serving: Calories 18, Total Fat 0.5g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 3g, Protein 1g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 1g, Sodium 13mg.

Carbohydrates 60 % Protein 22 % Fat 22 %

Zucchini Boats

2 medium zucchini

1/2 cup shredded carrot

1/4 cup chopped onion

Vegetable cooking spray

1 cup corn bread stuffing mix

3 tablespoons water

1/4 cup shredded reduced fat sharp cheddar cheese

Halve zucchini lengthwise. Scoop out pulp, leaving 1/4-inch thick shells. Discard pulp. Place zucchini halves, cut side down, in a large skillet. Add 1/2 cup water. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Drain zucchini on paper towels. Meanwhile prepare stuffing. Lightly spray a medium saucepan with vegetable spray. Add carrot and onion and cook over medium heat until onion is tender. Stir in stuffing mix and water. Next, spoon stuffing into prepared zucchini. Sprinkle cheese on top of the stuffing in each zucchini then place them in a shallow baking dish. Bake in a 350° oven for about 20 minutes or until zucchini are tender and stuffing is heated through. Makes 4 servings.

Nutritional Analysis per serving: Calories 114, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 1g, Carbohydrates 17g, Protein 5.6g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 2.4g, Sodium 226mg.

Carbohydrates 58 % Protein 19 % Fat 23 %

Summer Squash Muffins

This recipe is a great for breakfast or as an addition to summer meals. Plus by using the microwave oven to cook the muffins, you won't heat up your kitchen!

1 cup all-bran cereal

3/4 cup skim milk
2 cups grated zucchini or other summer squash
1/2 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 cup all purpose enriched flour
2 Tbsp. frozen orange juice concentrate
2 Tbsp. canola oil
1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1 tsp. baking powder
1tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
1/8 tsp. salt
1 medium egg, beaten

In a large bowl, combine bran with milk and grated squash. Let stand 5 minutes. Meanwhile in a medium sized bowl, mix remaining ingredients. Add this mixture to bran mixture and mix well. Line microwave-safe muffin tin with 2 paper liners per cup, and fill each cup one-half full. Microwave on High 5 to 5 1/2 minutes or until muffins are springy when touched. It is best to microwave 6 at a time. Makes 12 muffins.

Nutritional Analysis per muffin: Calories 91, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 15g, Protein 3.4g, Cholesterol 16mg, Fiber 3g, Sodium 155mg.
Carbohydrates 58 % Protein 14 % Fat 28 %